

REMARKS

Entry of this Amendment is proper under 37 CFR §1.116, since no new claims or issues are raised and since the only claim amendments place all remaining claims into condition for immediate allowance, based on the comments in the Advisory Action mailed September 1, 2006.

It is noted that, notwithstanding any claim amendments made herein, Applicants' intent is to encompass equivalents of all claim elements, even if amended herein or later during prosecution.

Claims 3, 4, 8-32, 37-41, 45, and 50 are all of the claims pending in the present Application. Claims 1, 2, 5-7, 33-36, 42-44, 46-49, and 51-53 are canceled so that claims indicated in the Advisory Action mailed September 1, 2006, as allowable can proceed immediately to allowance. Applicants reserve the right to file a continuation for the rejected claims, particularly in view of the fact that the Examiner indicated in the Advisory Action that new issues were raised by the claim amendments.

Per the Office Action mailed on June 16, 2006, claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 19-23, 25-33, 38-40, 43, and 47 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over US Patent 5,434,917 to Naccache et al., further in view of US Patent 5,974,150 to Kaish, and further in view of US Patent 6,543,685 to Lien et al., and further yet in view of US Patent 5,426,700 to Berson.

Claims 34-36 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Naccache, further in view of Kaish, and further in view of Berson. Claims 44, 52, and 53 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Naccache, further in view of Kaish, further in view of Lien, and further in view of US Patent 6,131,090 to Basso et al. Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Naccache, further in view of Kaish, further in view of Lien, further in view of Berson, and further in view of US Patent 5,949,881 to Davis.

Claims 10 and 11 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Naccache, further in view of Kaish, further in view of Lien, further in view of Berson, further in view of Davis, and further in view of US Patent 6,297,888 to Noyes et al. Claims 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Naccache, further in view of Kaish, further in view of Lien, further in view of Berson, and further in view of US Patent 6,297,888 to Noyes et al.

S/N 09/397,503

IBM Docket: YOR919990129US1

Claims 14 and 37 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Naccache, further in view of Kaish, further in view of Lien, further in view of Berson, and further in view of US Patent 6,155,605 to Bratchley et al. Claim 41 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Naccache, further in view of Kaish, further in view of Lien, further in view of Berson, and further in view of Basso.

Claim 45 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Naccache, further in view of Kaish, further in view of Lien, further in view of Berson, and further in view of US Patent 5,257,389 to Liu et al. Claim 46 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Naccache, further in view of Kaish, further in view of Lien, and further in view of Noyes.

Claim 48 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Naccache, further in view of Kaish, further in view of Lien, and further in view of US Patent 6,233,339 to Kawano et al. Claim 49 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Naccache, further in view of Kaish, further in view of Lien, and further in view of US Patent 6,155,605 to Bratchley et al.

Claim 51 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Naccache, further in view of Kaish, further in view of Lien, and further in view of US Patent 3,795,805 to Swanberg et al.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claim 50 would be allowable if rewritten in independent format and in a manner that overcomes the rejection under 35 USC §112, first paragraph. Applicants have accordingly rewritten this claim and believe it is now in condition for allowance.

In the Advisory Action mailed on September 1, 2006, the Examiner indicated that some of the rejections listed above were removed, based on arguments in the Amendment Under 37 CFR §1.116 that was filed on August 16, 2006.

Specifically, although this Amendment Under 37 CFR §1.116 was not entered, the Examiner indicated that the arguments/claim amendments submitted therein provided the basis for considering that claims 3, 4, 8-32, 37-41, and 45 would be allowed and that claim 50 would be allowed if rewritten in independent format.

S/N 09/397,503
IBM Docket: YOR919990129US1

14

Applicants accordingly have canceled the claims listed in the Advisory Action as raising new issues and/or rejected and believe that all remaining claims are now in condition for an immediate allowance.

FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 3, 4, 8-32, 37-41, 45, and 50, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.


Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Assignee's Deposit Account No. 09-0441.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date:

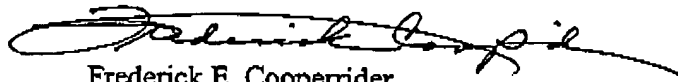
9/18/06


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CERTIFICATION OF TRANSMISSION

I certify that I transmitted via facsimile to (571) 273-8300 this Amendment under 37 CFR §1.116 to Examiner M. Heneghan on September 18, 2006.


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IBM Docket: YOR919990129US1